

THE
Possibility & Necessity

OF THE
Inward and Immediate
REVELATION

OF THE
Spirit of God,

Towards the
Foundation and Ground

OF
True FAITH,
PROVED,

In a Letter writ in *Latin* to the *Heer Paets*;
And now also put into *English*.

By Robert Barclay.

London, Re-Printed and Sold by T. Sowle, in
White-Hart-Court in *Gracious-street*, 1703.



Advertisement

TO THE

READER.

THis serves to inform thee, That it is above seven Years since this Epistle was Printed in *Latin*: The Person to whom it was writ, the *Heer Paets*, is a Man of no mean Account, both in the Learned and Politick World; the Conference I had with him, was lately after his Return from *Spain*, where he had been Ambassador from the *United Netherlands*; I discoursed with him, on the same Subject, last Year at *London*, where he was one of the Commissioners for the *Dutch East-India Company*, but

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could not find him propose any thing new, nor what I could conceive, had any weight towards a Reply : What his Reasons were, not to prosecute this Matter further, I shall not determine ; But thus far he readily yielded, *That he had been mistaken in his Notion of the Quakers, for he found they could make a Reasonable Plea for the Foundation of their Religion.* Upon my reading it over again, I found an Inclination in my self, and was perswaded by some Friends, to publish it in a Language more obvious to all my Country-Men. It is a Question now frequently tossed, *What is the Ground and Foundation of Faith?* And when the Matter is sifted to the bottom, it resolves in *Tradition* or *Revelation* ; for those who lay claim to the Scripture, and would make it the Foundation of their Faith, do resolve it but in a *Tradition*, when the Motives of *Credibility* are enquired into ; since the *Subjective Revelation*, which they yield, comes but in the last place,
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and is by themselves termed, *Medium incognitum assentiendi*. And such a Revelation those of Rome will not refuse, to influence them to Assent to the Determination of the Church: So those Protestants, who say, *The Subjective Operation of the Spirit influences them (though they know not how) to believe the Scripture presented and conveyed to them by Tradition, as the Dictates of GOD's Spirit, and so understand them as their Preachers interpret them; differ not much, or at least have not Reason to differ from the Church of Rome, who say, The Spirit influences them to believe the Scriptures, as proposed by the Church, and according as her Doctors and Councils interpret them; and neither has any better Foundation than Tradition: And to speak the Truth plainly, the Faith of both resolves in the Veneration they have for their Doctors. But whereas the one affirms, They do it by an intire Submission, they think it decent to say, They judge them Infallible; and certainly, it is most Reasonable, that*

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that such as affirm the first, believe the last: The other, because they pretend they believe the Church but conditionally, have denied to her *Infallibility*; though generally they be as credulous as the other: And I find the Doctors of their Church as angry to be contradicted as the other; that is an Ingredient goes to the Composition of all Clergy-Men, since it became a Trade, and went to make a part of the outward Policy of the World; from whence has flowed that Monster PERSECUTION. In short, the matter is easily driven into this narrow compass, We believe, either because of an *Outward* or *Inward Testimony*; that is, because it is outwardly delivered to us, or inwardly revealed to us. For my part, I think the *Papists* do wisely in pleading for *Infallibility*, for certainly the True Church never was nor can be without it: And the *Protestants* do honestly in not claiming it, because they are sensible they want it. I should

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should therefore desire the one to prove that they are Infallible ; and advise the other to believe they may, and seek after it : But I am sure, neither the one is, nor the other cannot, without *Immediate Divine Revelation*. Therefore, as to deny Revelation, is a bad way to prove Infallibility ; so to deny Infallibility, is a bad way to make a Reformation ; since they who do Reform, had need to be certain they are doing so. The Asserting of *Infallibility* in the Church of *Christ*, is not the Error of the Church of *Rome* ; but the Pretending to it, when they have it not, and placing it where they should not : But since those who oppose *Immediate Revelation*, do it on the account that they reckon it either Impossible or Unnecessary, I hope there will be as much found in this *Epistle*, as will evince the contrary. I have now exceeded the limits of an Advertisement, but (being known not to be a Man of Form) I hope

Apvertisement to the Reader.

I hope my *Reader* will Excuse me;
to whom I wish true certainty of
Faith, and so bid him Heartily
Farewel.

R. BARCLAY.

The 9th of October, 1686.

The

*The Possibility and Necessity of the Inward
Immediate Revelation of the Spirit of
G O D, towards the Foundation and
Ground of True Faith, &c.*

My Friend;

ALBEIT I judge I did fully answer to all thy Arguments in that Conference we had concerning the *Necessity and Possibility of Inward Immediate Revelation*, and of the *Certainty of true Faith from thence proceeding*: Nevertheless, because after we had made an end, and were parting, thou would'st needs remit to my further Consideration the strength of thy Argument, as that in which thou supposed'st the very hinge of the Question to lye: That I might satisfy thy desire, and that the Truth might more appear, I did further consider of it; But the more I weighed it, I found it the weaker: And therefore that thou thy self may'st make the truer Judgment of it, I thought meet to send thee my further Considerations thereon, (which I had done ere now, had not I both at *London* and elsewhere been diverted by other necessary occasions) Wherein, I doubt not, but thou wilt perceive a full and distinct answer to thy Argument. But if thou canst not as yet yield to the Truth, or think'st my answer in any part to be defective, so that there yet remains with

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thee any matter of doubt or scruple, I do earnestly desire thee, that as I, for thy sake, and out of love to the Truth, have not been wanting to examine thy Argument, and to transmit to thee my Considerations thereon; So thou may'st give thy self the trouble to write and send me what thou hast further to say, which my Friend N. N. who delivers thee this, will at what time thou shalt appoint receive from thee, and transmit to me thy Letter, that at last the Truth may appear where it is.

And that the whole matter may the more clearly be understood, it will be fit in the first place, to propose thy Argument, whereby thou opposest the *Immediate Revelation of GOD* in the Saints; thence concluding thou hast fully overturned the Foundation of the People called *Quakers*. Which Argument of thine is,

That since (as thou judgest) the Being and Substance of the Christian Religion consisteth in the Knowledge of, and Faith concerning the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ Jesus; thou considerest the substance of the Christian Religion as a contingent Truth; which contingent Truth is matter of fact: whence thou reasonest, That matter of fact cannot be known but by the relation of another, or by the perception of the outward Senses: Because there are naturally in our Souls no Ideas of contingent Truths, such as are concerning necessary Truths: to wit, That GOD is, and that the whole is greater than the part; And since it may without absurdity be said, that
GOD

GOD cannot make a contingent Truth to become a necessary Truth; neither can GOD reveal contingent Truths or matters of Fact, but as contingent Truths are revealed; But matters of Fact are not revealed but by the outward Senses: From whence thou concludest, That Men are not even obliged to believe GOD producing any Revelation in the Soul concerning matter of Fact, whether of a thing done or to be done, unless there be added some Miracles obvious to the outward Senses, by which the Soul may be ascertained that that Revelation cometh from God: And this thou endeavourest also to prove from the Scripture, Rom. 10. where the Apostle saith, Faith cometh by hearing: And because the Apostle speaketh afterwards of those who were sent in the plural number: Thence thou concludest, That to be spoken of outward Preaching by the Ministry of Men: And since the Apostle uses a Question, saying, How shall they believe unless they hear? Thou gatherest from the Induction and Connexion of the Text, that the Apostle treats only of outward hearing; thence concluding, that without outward hearing, Faith cannot be produced: And therefore, that there can be no Immediate Revelation by the simple Operation of the Spirit in the Mind, unless there be somewhat proposed to the Outward Senses.

Before I proceed to a direct Answer to this Argument, some things are necessary to be premised;

First then, That is falsely supposed, that the

Essence of the Christian Religion consists in the Historical Faith and Knowledge of the *Birth, Death, Life, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ*. That Faith and Historical Knowledge is indeed a part of the Christian Religion; But not such an *Essential* Part, as that without which the Christian Religion cannot consist; But an *Integral* Part, which goes to the compleating of the Christian Religion, as the Hands or Feet of a Man are *Integral* Parts of a Man, without which nevertheless a Man may exist, but not an intire and compleat Man.

Secondly, If by *Immediate Revelation*, be understood such a Revelation of GOD as begets in our Souls an historical Faith and Knowledge of the Birth of Christ in the Flesh, without the means of the holy Scripture, we do not contend for such a Revelation as commonly given or to be expected by us or any other Christians; For albeit many other Evangelical Truths be manifested to us by the immediate Manifestation of God, not using the Scripture as the means: yet the Historical Knowledge of Christ is not commonly manifested to us, nor to any others, but by the Holy Scripture as the means, and that by way of a *Material Object*, even as when we see the Person of *Peter* or *Paul* to our visive Faculty immediately, yet not without the medium of that Person concurring as a *material Object* to produce that sight, while the Light of the Sun concurs as the *formal Object* of that vision or sight: So that when we Livingly and
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Spiritually know the History of the Birth of Christ in the Flesh, the *Inward Revelation* or *Illumination* of GOD, which is like the Sun's Light, proceeding from the *Divine Sun*, doth shine into the Eye of the Mind, and by *Its* Influence moves the Mind to assent unto the Historical Truth of CHRIST's Birth, Life, &c. in the Reading or Hearing the Scripture, or meditating therein.

Thirdly, Nevertheless we do firmly assert, that GOD can most easily, clearly and certainly manifest to our Minds the Historical Truths of CHRIST's Birth, &c. when it so pleaseth Him, even without the Scripture, or any other outward mean. And because this Argument seems to be formed against the possibility of such a Revelation, therefore I shall proceed to discuss it. But first, thou may'st mind that the Prophets who foretold CHRIST's *coming in the Flesh*, and *being to be born of a Virgin*, and *afterwards to suffer Death*, did know these Truths of Fact, by the *Inward Inspiration* of GOD, without Outward Means, for which, see 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. Now that which hath been, may be.

Fourthly, This Argument doth at most conclude, that we cannot know *Naturally* any truth of Fact, but by the relation of another without us, or by the perception of the outward Senses; Because there are *naturally* in our Minds no *Ideas* concerning contingent Truths (and every Truth of Fact is a contingent Truth) as there are of necessary Truths. This then proveth

veth that we cannot *naturally* know any contingent Truth but by the relation of another, or perception of the outward Senses : But that hindreth not, but we may know a contingent Truth by a *supernatural Knowledge*, GOD supplying the place of an outward Relator, who is so true, that he may and ought to be believed, sith GOD is the Fountain of Truth.

Fifthly, When GOD doth make known unto Men any matter of Fact by Divine immediate Revelation or Inspiration, GOD speaking as to the Ear of the Heart of the inward Man, or as by his Finger writing it therein. Two things are to be considered in such an *Immediate Revelation*.

1. *TòMateriale*; The matter of Fact, or thing revealed, which is contingent.

2. *Tò Formale* ; The Form or Mode, how the Revelation is made, which Form is an inward, Divine and *supernatural Revelation*, which is the Voice or Speech of God, inwardly speaking to the Ear of the inward Man, or Mind of Man, or a Divine Writing, supernaturally imprinted therein. Now as to the *material Part*, or the thing and matter revealed ; This is indeed a contingent Truth, and of it self is not manifest to the Mind, but because of the Form, that is, because of the *Divine Mode* and *supernatural* inward Operation, the matter is known to be true : For that Divine and Supernatural Inward Operation, which the Mind doth feel and perceive in it self, is the Voice of
GOD

GOD speaking unto Man, which by its *Nature* and *specifick Property*, is as clearly distinguished and understood to be the Voice of GOD, as the Voice of *Peter* or *James* is known to be the Voice of such Men: for every Being, as a Being, is knowable, and that by its own specifick Nature or Property proceeding from its Nature, and hath its proper *Idea* by which it's distinguishable from every other thing, if to be its *Idea* be stirred up in us, and clearly proposed to us.

Sixthly, Now as some Beings are *Natural*, some *Supernatural*; so some *Ideas* are *Natural*, some *Supernatural*: And as when any *natural Idea* is excited in us, we clearly know it. So also when a *supernatural Idea* is raised, we clearly know that whereof it is the *Idea*: but the Voice of GOD speaking to the Mind of Man, is a supernatural Being, and stirreth up in us a *supernatural Idea*, by which we clearly know that inward Voice to be the Voice of GOD, and not the Voice or Operation of another, or of any evil Spirit, or Angel, because none of these has a *supernatural Idea*, as the Voice of GOD, and his Divine Operation hath; for it is full of Vigour, Virtue, and Divine Glory, as saith the *Psalmist*, who had often experience of it, and we also in our measures are Witnesses thereof, for the Voice of GOD is known to be his by its Divine Virtue.

Seventhly, The Senses are either *Outward* or *Inward*, and the *Inward Senses* are either *Natural*

nal or *Supernatural* : We have an Example of the Inward Natural Sense in being Angred or Pacified, in Love and Hatred, or when we perceive and discern any Natural Truth, (such as the Natural Maxims, to wit, *That the whole is greater than the part* : or when we deduce any Conclusion by the strength of Natural Reason, that Perception also in a larger Sense may be called an *inward Sense*. But an Example of an *inward supernatural Sense* is, when the Heart or Soul of a pious Man feels in it self *Divine Motions, Influences, and Operations*, which sometimes are as the Voice or Speech of GOD, sometimes as a most pleasant and glorious Illustration or visible Object to the inward Eye ; sometimes as a most sweet Savour or Taste, sometimes as a Heavenly and Divine Warmness, or (so to speak) melting of the Soul in the Love of GOD. Moreover this *Divine and supernatural Operation* in the Mind of a Man, is a true and most glorious Miracle, which when it is perceived by the *Inward and supernatural Sense*, divinely raised up in the Mind of Man, doth so evidently and clearly perswade the Understanding to assent to the thing revealed, that there is no need of an outward Miracle ; for this Assent is not because of the thing it self, but because of the Revelation proposing it, which is the Voice of GOD : For when the Voice of GOD is heard in the Soul, the Soul doth as certainly conclude the truth of that Voice, as the truth of GOD's Being, from whom it proceeds.

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These things being thus premised ; I now proceed to a direct Answer: For what is said, that GOD cannot make a contingent Truth to become a necessary Truth, I agree : But when any *Contingent Truth* is manifest to us by the *Immediate Revelation* of GOD, there is in it two things to be considered, to wit, the thing revealed which is *Contingent* ; And the Revelation it self, which upon the Supposition that it is a Divine Revelation, *is no Contingent Truth*, but a most *Necessary Truth*. And this all Mankind will say, That this Proposition, *Every divine Revelation is necessarily true*, is as clear and evident as that Proposition, *That every Whole is greater than its Part*.

But thou wilt say, How knowest thou that a *Divine Revelation* is a *Divine Revelation*? I answer, How knowest thou that a Whole is a Whole, and a Part is a Part? Thou wilt say, By the *natural Idea* excited in me of a Whole and of a Part. I answer again, Even so, a Divine Revelation is known to be such by a *Supernatural Idea* of Divine Revelation stirred up in us, and that by a Divine Motion or *Supernatural Operation*. But it is no wonder that Men, who have no Experience of *Supernatural Ideas*, or at least do not heed them, do deny them; which is as if a Man naturally blind, denied Light or Colours; or a deaf Man, Sounds, because they experience them not. Therefore we cannot dissemble that we feel a fervent Zeal, even Divinely kindled in us against such an absurd

furd Opinion, as affirms, *That God cannot ascertain us of his Will in any contingent Truth, but by proposing it to the outward Senses.* This Opinion does in a manner turn Men into Brutes, as if Man were not to believe his GOD, unless he propose what is to be believed to the outward Senses, which the Beasts have common with us; yea, it derogates from GOD's Power, and imputes Weakness to him, as if he could not do that which not only both good and evil Angels can do, but which the meanest Creatures can do, and the most unsensible: As for instance, the Heat of the Fire, the Coldness of the Air, and Water worketh upon us; yea, if a Pin prick us, we feel it, and that by the outward Sense; because the Objects are outward and carnal. But since GOD is a most Pure and Glorious Spirit, when he operateth in the Innermost Parts of our Minds by his Will; Shall not He and his Will be clearly felt according to his Nature? That is, by a *spiritual and supernatural Sense*; For as the Nature of GOD is, so is the Nature of his Will, to wit, purely Spiritual; And therefore requireth a *Spiritual Sense* to discern it; which *Spiritual Sense*, when it is raised up in us by a Divine Operation, doth as clearly and certainly know the Voice or Revelation of the Will of GOD, concerning any thing which GOD is pleased to reveal, however *Contingent*, as the outward Sense knows, and perceives the *Outward Object*: And it is no less absurd to require of GOD, who is a most pure Spirit,

Spirit, to manifest his Will to Men by the outward Senses, else not to be credited ; As to require us to see Sounds, and hear Light and Colours. For as the Objects of the outward Senses are not to be confounded, but every Object is to have its proper Sense: So must we judge of inward and spiritual Objects, which have their proper *Sense*, whereby they are to be perceived. And tell me how God doth manifest his Will concerning matters of Fact, when he sends his Angels to Men, since Angels (as is commonly received) have not outward Senses, or at least not so gross ones as ours are? Yea, when Men die, and appear before the Tribunal of GOD, whether unto eternal Life or Death, how can they know this, having laid down their Bodies, and therewith their outward Senses? And nevertheless this Truth of GOD is a *Truth of Fact*, as is the historical Truth of Christ's Birth in the Flesh. And, which is yet more near, how do good and holy Men, even in this Life, most certainly know that they are in Favour and Grace with GOD? No *outward Revelation* doth make this known unto them, but *the Spirit* (as saith the Apostle) *beareth witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of GOD*. For the meer Testimony of a humane Conscience, without the inward Testimony of the holy Spirit, cannot beget in us a firm and immoveable Testimony of our Sonship, because the Heart of Man is deceitful ; and if the Testimony thereof were true, at most it is but a humane Testimony,

which begetteth in us only an humane Faith : But that Faith by which holy Men believe they are the Sons of GOD, is a *Divine Faith*, which leans upon a *Divine Testimony* of the holy Spirit, witnessing in them that they are the Sons of GOD. Moreover, when a good Man feels in himself that undeclarable Joy of the holy Spirit, concerning which the holy Scripture speaks, and which is the common Privilege of the Saints, how or whence feels he this Joy? Truly this Argument concludes no less against *this heavenly spiritual Joy*, which is begotten in the Souls of the Saints by the holy Spirit, than it does against the immediate Revelation of GOD ; for there is *no natural Idea* in Men of this spiritual Joy ; else meer natural Men, yea, such as are prophane and ungodly, would feel it as much as the Godly : But because it is a *Supernatural thing*, therefore it can have *no true Idea*, but what is Supernatural. Moreover, whence is it that prophane Men feel sometimes in themselves the Wrath of GOD as Fire, when all things, as to the outward, go as prosperously with them as with the Godly, and oftentimes more prosperously? For there is *no natural Idea* in Men of this inward Wrath of GOD : There is also an inward Grief oftentimes raised up in wicked Men from the sense of this Wrath of GOD, which very much vexeth and tormenteth their Minds ; and nevertheless this Grief hath *no natural Idea* in us : For oftentimes wicked Men feel not this Sorrow, for GOD
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sometimes is, as it were, silent, while the Wicked sin, as in *Psalms* 50.

All which things do most clearly demonstrate that there are in Men *Supernatural Ideas* of Supernatural Beings; which *Ideas* are nevertheless not perceived by us, unless they be stirred up by some *Supernatural Operation* of GOD, which raiseth up in us *Supernatural and Spiritual Senses*, which by their Nature are as distinguishable from the natural Senses, whether inward or outward, as the natural Senses are distinguished one from another by their specifick Difference. Of which Spiritual Senses the Scripture speaks frequently, as *Heb.* 5. 14. Where is spoken of the Spiritual Senses in general, by which the Spiritual Man hath the discerning of Good and Evil; which Good is of a Spiritual Nature, and conduceth to feed in us a Spiritual and Divine Life; And the Evil is of that kind, by which the Spiritual Life is in us hurt: To wit, Sins, whether carnal or spiritual: All which cannot be discerned but by such who have *Spiritual Senses* stirred up in them, as saith the Apostle. In other places the Scripture also speaketh of these Spiritual Senses, in particular, as of the spiritual Seeing: *Psal.* 34. 9. Of the spiritual Hearing, *Psal.* 85. 9. Of spiritual Tasting, *Psal.* 34. 8. Of spiritual Smelling, *Cant.* 1. 3. Of spiritual Touching, *Acts.* 17. 8. And in many other places of Scripture we read of those spiritual Senses in particular. Yea, it is the Promise of the Gospel, that *the Glory of GOD*

GOD *shall be seen of holy Men*, such as are clean of Heart, even in this Life: *Isa. 33. 17 Mat. 5. 8.* Which were fulfilled in the primitive Christians; see *John 1. 14. 1 John 1. 1, 2, 3, 4. 2 Cor. 3. 18. and Chap. 4. 6.* But what is this Vision of GOD and Divine Glory which the Souls of the Saints enjoy in this Life, which is only as the Earnest or First-fruits of that more abundant glorious Vision in the Life to come, concerning which the Scripture so much declareth, which is the highest Happines of the Immortal Soul!

For this Argument seemeth to do no less Injury to the Saints, than to rob them of this most glorious Treasure, both in this Life and that to come; For there is in us *no Natural Idea* of this Divine Glory, as there is not of GOD himself, which is any ways proportionable unto so great Happines, which the Scripture so much declareth of, by which the Godly are rewarded, partly in this Life, and plenarily in that which is to come. We confess indeed, there is in all Men, as well the Godly as Ungodly, some sort of *Idea of GOD, as of a most perfect Being*; and that therefore this Proposition, *There existeth a most perfect Being*, doth as clearly appear to humane Understanding, as that *the whole is greater than the part*; And therefore this Proposition, *That a most perfect Being existeth*, ought to be numbred among the Principles that of themselves are manifest; But *this Idea of GOD* is as manifest to Ungodly as to Godly Men, yea, is as clear-

clearly perceived by the Devil, as by the most holy Angels, for all the Devils know that GOD is ; But yet how blind is the Devil, and all wicked Men, as to the Vision of GOD, which is the chief Reward of the Saints.

There is then either *no such Vision of GOD*; neither in this Life, nor in that to come, or there is a *Supernatural Idea of GOD in us*, by which we are made capable of this Vision : Which *Supernatural Idea of GOD*, differeth much from that *Natural Idea of GOD*, which *Cartesius* and his Followers so much talk of, (albeit others, long before *Cartesius*, did observe this *Natural Idea of GOD*, and spoke of it) But the Happiness of the Saints consists not in contemplating *this Natural Idea of GOD* ; Else the Wicked would be as happy as the Godly, yea, the very Devil, as the most holy Angel ; Since as is said, both the Devil, and most wicked Men, do as clearly perceive *this Natural Idea of GOD*, as the most holy Men or Angels.

If the Scriptures then be true, there is in Men a *Supernatural Idea of GOD*, which altogether differs from this natural *Idea*, I say, in *all Men* ; Because all Men are capable of Salvation ; and consequently, of injoyning this Divine Vision : Now this Capacity consisteth herein, that they have such a *Supernatural Idea* in themselves : For if there were no such *Idea* in them, it were impossible they should so know God : *For whatsoever is clearly and Distinctly known, is known by its proper Idea*, neither can it otherways be clearly

ly and distinctly known ; For the *Ideas* of all things are Divinely planted in our Souls ; for they are not begotten in us by outward Objects, or outward Causes, (as the better Philosophy teacheth) but only are by these outward things excited or stirred up : And this is true, not only in *Supernatural Ideas of GOD*, and things Divine, and in *Natural Ideas* of the natural Principles of humane Understanding, and Conclusions thence deduced by the strength of humane Reason ; but even in the *Ideas* of outward Objects, which are perceived by the outward Senses ; As that noble Christian Philosopher *Boetius* hath well observed, to which also the *Cartesian Philosophy* agreeth : For when I see any outward Object, whether it be a Man, or Horse, or Bird, the outward Object does not treat in my eye, nor yet in my mind, the *Idea* of those things : For the outward Object does nothing but imprint in our sensible Organs a Corporal motion : Now there is nothing in a Corporal motion that can form in us the *Ideas* of those things ; For all *Ideas* are of a spiritual Nature : Now nothing that is Corporal can produce that which is Spiritual, because the less excellent cannot produce the more excellent ; Else the Effect would exceed its Cause, which is against all sound Reason, that it should bring forth what were of a higher and more excellent kind. Therefore all *Ideas*, whether of *Natural or Spiritual things*, are Divinely implanted in our Minds ; Which nevertheless do not always appear,

pear, but sometimes appear, and sometimes are as it were hid in us, and sometimes are stirred up in us by Causes outward or inward, and again do as it were sleep and shun our Observation, and seem not to be otherways distinguished by our Minds, but as Thoughts and Perceptions of the Mind from the Mind it self. That is, as the *Mode* from the *Subject*, or as a *Bodily Motion* from the Body whereof it is the Motion; For as is the Relation of a Bodily Motion to a Body, so is the Relation of a Thought or Perception of the Mind to the Mind. In this nevertheless they differ, that the Mind can move it self, and operate in it self, which a Body cannot do: But as a Body can be moved by another; So also can the Mind, after its manner, be moved by another; and that both by outward and inward Causes: But chiefly by GOD himself, in whose hand all Souls and Creatures are. But of these things there is enough said at present, and I hope, I have not thus far impertinently Philosophized.

To return again to the matter in question: It is already proved, *That there is in a Man a Supernatural Idea of GOD*, from whence it easily may be concluded, *There are other Supernatural Ideas in Man also*: To wit, Concerning Divine and Supernatural things; Yea, as the Saints experience doth prove it, neither doth sound Reason any ways contradict it.

As there are then *Natural Ideas* concerning the things of the natural World; As for instance,

stance, *Ideas* of Light and Colours, *Ideas* of Voice and Sounds, *Ideas* of Savouring and Smelling, *Ideas* of Tasting and Feeling, as of Heat and Cold, of Grief and Joy: It follows also *that there are Ideas of supernatural things*, concerning the Divine and Supernatural things of the Divine and Supernatural World; As *Ideas* of those things above-mentioned in the Spiritual World: And as the *Natural Ideas* are stirred up in us by outward and *Natural Bodies*; So *those Divine and Supernatural Ideas* are stirred up in us by a certain Principle, which is a Body in Naturals in relation to the Spiritual World; And therefore may be called a Divine Body: Not as if it were a part of GOD, who is a most pure Spirit, *But the Organ or Instrument of GOD*, by which he worketh in us, and stirreth up in us these *Ideas* of Divine things. *This is that Flesh and Blood of Christ*, by which the Saints are nourished, which is a Myſtery to all unregenerated and meer natural Men, never to be reached by them, while they remain in that State.

Now if there be ſuch *Supernatural Ideas*, there are alſo *Senſes*, or perceptive Faculties, by which thoſe *Ideas* are perceived, for thoſe are two Relatives that ſuppoſe and infer one another: But in wicked Men thoſe *Senſes* or Faculties do as it were ſleep (as the viſive Faculty of a blind Man) But in the Godly they are ſtirred up. Now by theſe *Divine and Spiritual Senſes*, which are diſtinct and diſtinguiſhable

ble from all the natural Faculties of the Soul, whether of Imagination or natural Reason, spiritual minded Men do behold the Glory and Beauty of GOD, in respect whereof, and for which all the Glory of this World is despicable to them; Yea, even as Dross and Dung, and they also hear GOD *Inwardly speaking in their Souls* words truly Divine and Heavenly, full of Virtue and Divine Life; And they favour and taste of Divine things, and do as it were handle them with the hands of their Souls; And those Heavenly Enjoyments do as really differ in their Nature from all false Similitudes and fictitious Appearances of them, which either the Mind of Man by its own strength can imitate, or any evil Spirit to deceive Man, can counterfeit; as a true Man differs from the dead Image of a Man, or true Bread, Honey, Wine or Milk, doth from the meer Picture of those things. And albeit either the Imagination of Man, or Subtilty of the Devil, may counterfeit false Likenesses of these Enjoyments, by which Men may be deceived; and no doubt many are deceived; That doth not hinder but that those Divine Injoyments are clearly perceived in such in whom the *Divine and Spiritual Senses* are truly opened, and the true *Supernatural Ideas* of those things truly raised up: And if there be at any time a mistake, *the Divine Illumination* is not the cause of that mistake, but some evil Disposition of the Mind, as happeneth in those things relating

to natural Reason ; For there are many false appearances of Reason, which differ as much from true Reason, as those false and pretended Revelations and Diabolical Inspirations from such as are truly Divine. Now how many Men, who would be esteemed Philosophers, are miserably deceived by those false Likenesses of Reason ? Judging their false Reasons to be the true Similitudes of things and solid Ratiocinations ; which nevertheless moveth no Man of sound Reason to reject sound and solid Reason, as doubtful and uncertain : For even sound natural Reason is an excellent Gift of GOD, and very useful to Mankind, when used in its proper place : But let none think to comprehend by their natural Reason, things that are of a divine and supernatural kind : And as we use to do when any one is deceived by false appearances of Reason, we endeavour to reduce them to contemplate the *first Natural Ideas* of natural things, and to meditate therein, which is a *Test or Touch-stone*, by which all the appearances and likenesses of Reason are to be examined ; if they contradict them, to be rejected : So also when any one is deceived by his own Imagination, or the cunning of Satan, thinking any evil Inspiration of the Devil to be a true Divine Revelation ; He that is so deceived, is to be reduced to the *natural Ideas* of things (if so be that pretended Revelation doth contradict them ; For no true Divine Revelation can contradict the true natural *Idea*)

or

or to the *Supernatural Ideas* of Divine things, which are most simple, clear and obvious to the Minds of Men, if they will turn their Minds to the *Divine Seed in them*; or at least those *Ideas* are readily and easily stirred up: For as in *Natural Ideas*, so in *Supernatural*, some are more easily raised than others; For there is a certain Order both of *Natural and Supernatural Ideas*, whereby they are gradually excited; Nor is there any mortal Man in whose Mind at some time or other there is not stirred up some *Idea*, that's truly *Supernatural and Divine*: And who hath not felt in himself both the Wrath and Judgment of GOD for his Sins; And also some tender and gentle taste of GOD's Love and Goodness, by which wicked Men are invited to Repentance. Now that which is thought to be a *Divine Revelation*, is felt to contradict any *Divine and Supernatural Idea*, which is clearly perceived in the Soul, it is a manifest token that it is not a *Divine Revelation*, but either a false Imagination, or the wicked Suggestion of some evil Spirit.

But to proceed, if we will hear the Scripture, (as all Christians ought) it testifies to us, That GOD hath declared his Mind and Will, even concerning contingent Truths to come, in the Prophets; As that of the first to the *Hebrews* doth evidently declare, GOD who at sundry times, and in diverse manners spoke to our Fathers in the Prophets; Yea let us hear the Prophets themselves; *Hosea, Chap. i.* saith plainly,

ly, *That the word of the LORD was made in him,* as it is in the Hebrew. *Habbakkuk* also says, *As he was standing on his watch to see what Jehovah would speak in him:* And it is so manifest, that the most Heavenly Revelations are by *Inward Illustrations* and *Inspirations* in the very Minds of the Prophets, That it is strange how any that believes the Scripture should doubt of it. And if it happened at any time such Revelations were made in the natural Imaginations of the Prophets, or any of their Inward Natural Senses; Then it may be confessed, they could not be infallibly certain they came from GOD, unless they also felt GOD in the *Divine and Supernatural Senses*; by which they did most nearly approach to him, from these Superiour and most Inward Senses working upon the lower and less noble Faculties of the Mind. But which ever way the Prophets were certain that they were Inspired of GOD, even when they foretold *Contingent Truths* to come, it is without doubt they were most certainly perswaded that they were *Divinely Inspired*, and that frequently *without any Outward Miracle*; For *John the Baptist* did no Miracle, and many prophesied where there appeared no Miracle, as in the Scripture may be often observed. And we also by the *Inspiration of the same Divine Spirit*, by which the Prophets prophesied, do believe their Words and Writings to be Divine, concerning *Contingent Truths*, as well past as to come; else that Faith by which we believe the

the Scripture would not be *Divine*, but *meerly Humane*. And thence we need no outward Miracles to move us to Believe the Scriptures, And therefore much less were they necessary to the Prophets who writ them; For we see in many places of the Prophets, where they declare Prophecies as revealed to them of GOD, there is not a word mentioned of any outward Miracle, as that by which alone they were certain of it. Moreover the Falseness of this Argument doth appear, in that the Scripture doth declare many *Contingent Truths* to have been revealed to the Prophets in *Dreams*. Now as natural and wicked Men do not see what they dream, by a real perception of the Outward Senses, but by *Inward Ideas* which are presented to the Mind, and perceived by it: *so it is also in Divine Revelations* of this nature: Of which we have a clear Example in *Joseph* the Husband of the Blessed Virgin, who when he observed his Wife with Child, was told in a Dream, That She had conceived by the Holy Ghost. Now I would know, to which of *Joseph's* outward Senses was this revealed? Or what Miracle had he to induce him to believe? Which could neither be proved (so as to make an infallible Application to *Mary*) by the Testimony of the Scripture: And which being against the Order of Nature, did choak his Reason: The Scripture mentions no Miracle in this matter, and yet no doubt *Joseph* had highly sinned, had he not believed this *Revelation*,
and

and notwithstanding rejected his Wife, as an Adulteress: But if thou sayest, That according to thy *Hypothesis*, there must have been a miracle; That is only to beg the Question: And how false this *Hypothesis* is, the Apostle shews clearly, 1 *Corinth.* 2. 14. *The Natural or Animal Man knoweth not, receiveth not the things of GOD.* Now Divine Revelations are of this nature; and if either chiefly or only those things were to be judged by the *Outward Senses*, it would contradict the Apostle: For natural Men, yea the most Wicked, have the use of the outward Senses as true and exact as the most Godly: And whereas the Apostle adds, *For they are Spiritually Discerned*, It puts the matter out of all Question: For thence it abundantly appears, that this discerning is not by the *Outward Senses*, according to the following Verse, for the Apostle saith, *The Spiritual Man judgeth all things*: This then must be done by *some Senses or Properties Peculiar* to the Spiritual Man, and in which he excels the natural Man, which is not in the outward Senses (as all do know.) Therefore *the perception of spiritual things cannot be by the outward Senses*, either as the chief or only means, as is falsely contended for.

Now as to these words of the Apostle, *Rom.* 10. *That Faith comes by Hearing*; *Zuinglius* observed well, That the Apostle intended not to affirm Faith to come by the hearing of the *Outward Word*; Neither doth the following words prove

prove it, *How shall they Believe, unless they hear? And how shall they hear, without a Preacher? And how shall they Preach, unless they be sent?* For the Apostle uses these words, not as his Arguments, but as Objections which might be formed, as the same Apostle uses in other places: To which Objections he answers in the same Chapter, as appears Verse 18. *But I say, have they not all heard? Yes truly, their Voice went into all the Earth:* That is, of the Father and Son, or the Father in the Word; which Word is not only *near us*, but (according to the same Apostle in the same Chapter) *in our Mouths, and in our Hearts.* But further, thou canst conclude nothing from this, *But that Faith is begotten by Outward Hearing only, and no otherwise:* For this is the strength of thy Argument, *That since Faith cannot be without Outward Hearing, Therefore nothing can be certainly believed, but where somewhat is proposed to the Outward Hearing.* For if thou acknowledge, *Faith can be begotten any otherwise than by Hearing,* thou lovest the strength of thy Argument: And if that Argument hold, *That Faith comes only by Outward Hearing,* thou destroyest the whole Hypothesis. For having before affirmed, *That outward Miracles are sufficient to render one certain of the Truth of any Revelation;* those Miracles, whether it be the Healing of the Sick, or the Raising of the Dead, would avail nothing, because those (as for the most part all Miracles) are obvious to the Sight, not to

the Hearing ; and if it be not by *Outward Hearing* only, thou canst conclude nothing from this place. But I the more wonder at thy using of this Argument, considering the Discourse we had together before we entred upon this Debate ; For when we were speaking of the Opinions of a certain Person, who denied the Certainty of every thing, but what was discerned by the outward Senses, thou condemnedst as most most absurd ; But why ? I cannot conceive, since there is no great difference betwixt those two Opinions : The one saith, *There can be no Certainty concerning any Truth, whether they be Necessary or Contingent, but by the perception of the Senses ;* The other affirms the same of *Contingent Truths*, though not of *Necessary Truths*. But among the Number of *Contingent Truths* thou Esteemest, what belongs to Christian Religion ? For thou reckon'st the *Necessary Truths* only to belong to Natural Religion. This then is all the difference, that that other Person says, *There is no Certainty of any Religion, neither Natural nor Christian, but by the perception of the Outward Senses ;* But thou say'st, Though thou esteem'st the Certainty of Natural Religion to be without them, yet not of the Christian Religion. But again, since thou esteem'st that not *Natural Religion*, but the *Christian Religion* is necessary to Savation : Thou must necessarily conclude, *That those Truths, which are necessary to Salvation, are only known*

known and believed by the benefit of the Outward Senses : In which Conclusion, which is the Sum of all, thou yields the Matter to that other Person. But lastly, If all the Certainty of our Faith, Hope, and Salvation, did depend upon the Infallibility of Outward Senses, we should be most miserable ; since these Senses can be easily deceived, and by many outward Casualties, and Natural Infirmities, whereunto the Godly are no less subject than the Wicked, are often vitiated ; and there are (as the Scripture affirms) False Miracles, which, as to the outward, cannot be distinguished from the True ; of which we cannot Infallibly Judge by the outward Senses, which only discern what is outward.

There is a Necessity then to have recourse to some other Means.

From all which it does appear, how Fallacious and Weak this Argument is : But Thanks be unto GOD, who would not that our Faith should be built upon so Uncertain and Doubtful a Foundation. And whoever hath known True Faith, or hath felt the Divine Testimony of GOD's Spirit in his Soul, will judge otherwise ; neither will be moved by such Reasonings. I pray GOD therefore to remove these Clouds, which darken thy Understanding, that thou may'st perceive the Glorious Gospel of Christ. This is that Saving Word of Grace, which I commend thee unto :

And

(28)

And that GOD may give thee a Heart inclinable to Believe and Obey the Truth, is the desire of

Tby Faithfal Friend,

R. Barclay.

The 24th of the Month,
called November, 1676.

THis Letter 'a Tear ago, at the desire of my Friend R.B. I delivered into the hands of the afore-named Ambassador, desiring his Answer in Writing, which he then promised; but not having as yet done, It was seen meet to be published.

Rotterdam, the 28th
of March, 1678.



B. F.

FINIS.

